

The
Hireling Ministry

March.

None of

John
Robinson

CHRISTS,

OR

**A Discourse touching the Propa-
gating the Gospel of CHRIST**


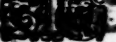
JESUS.

*Humbly Presented to such Pious
and Honourable Hands, whom
the present Debate thereof con-
cerns.*

By **ROGER WILLIAMS** of Providence
in New England.

**London, Printed in the second
Moneth, 1652.**

*In this Discourse are briefly touched
these Particulars.*

1.  He *Nationall* and *Parishionall* *Constitution* of *Churches*, is found to be the *Grand Idoll* of the *Nation*.
2.  The *inforcing* of the *Nation* to such a *constitution*, is the greatest *soul oppression* in this *Nation*.
3. The *Hireling Ministrie* attending upon such *assemblies* or others, is none of the *ministrie* of *Christ Jesus*.
4. The *Universities* of the *Nation*, as subordinate and subservient to such *ministries* and *Churches*, are none of the *Institutions* of *Christ Jesus*.
5. It is the absolute *duty* of the *civil state* to set free the souls of all men from that so long *oppressing yoke* of such *ministries* and *churches*. Yet
6. Ought the *Nation* and every *person* in it, be permitted to see with its own eyes, and to make *free choice* of what *worship* and *ministrie*, and *maintenance* they please, whether *parochial* or otherwise?
7. The *Apostolical Commission* and *ministrie* is long since interrupted and discontinued. Yet
8. Ever since the *beast Antichrist* rose, the *Lord* hath stirred up the *ministrie* of *Prophecie*, who must continue their *witness*, and *prophecie* until their *witness* be finished, and *slaughters* probably neer approaching accomplished,
9. The provocation of the *holy eyes*, is great in all *courts* throughout the *Nation*, by *millions* of *legal oaths*, which if not redressed, may yet be a fire kindled from his *jealousie*; who will not hold him *guiltless* which taketh his name in vain.
10. The free permitting of the *consciences* and *meetings* of *conscientious* and faithful *people* throughout the *Nation*; and the free permission of the *Nation* to frequent such *assemblies*, will be one of the principal Means, and expedients (as the present state of *Christianity* stands) for the propagating and spreading of the *Gospel* of the *Son of God*.



To all such *Honourable* and *Pious*
hands, whom the present *Debate* touching the
propagating of *CHRIST's* Gospel concerns :

AND TO

All such gentle *Bereans*, who with ingenious *Civility* de-
sire to search whether what's presented concerning
Christ Jesus, be so or no.

All humble respective Salutations.

I*T being a present high Debate (Honourable and Beloved) how the Gospel of Christ Jesus might more be propagated in this Nation : 2. And being desired by eminent friends, to cast in my mite towards it : 3. And having been engaged in several points of this Nature, in my former and later Endeavours, against that bloody Tenent of Persecution for cause of Conscience : 4. And also having been forced to observe the Goings of God, and the Spirits of Men, both in Old and New England, as touching the Church, the Ministry and Ordinances of Jesus Christ ; I did humbly apprehend my Call from Heaven ; not to hide my Candle under a Bed of Ease and Pleasure, or a Bushel of Gain and Profit ; but to set it on a Candlestick of this publique Profession, for the Benefit of others, and the Praise of the Father of all Lights and Godliness.*

The Author's
Call to this
Endeavour.

2. For the Substance and most of this, I suddenly drew it up, and delivered two Copies unto two eminent friends of Jesus Christ, and this Nation : But being importuned for more Copies then I was possibly able to transcribe, and being (therefore) advised by some honourable Friends, to use the help of the Press ; I am thus beyond my first Intentions and Desires) held forth in Publike.

Contrary to
Intention and
Desire.

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3. If ought I have expressed seem harsh, dissatisfactory, or offensive; I am humbly bold (I hope in the power of the Most High) to profess my readiness to discuss, debate, dispute; either by Word or Writing, with whom, or before whomsoever the present Debate concerns, with all Christian meekness, and due submission.

The Civil
Power in all
Ages, deceived
by the deceiv-
ing Hirelings,

4. It is true, I do absolutely deny it (against all comers) to be the Burthen of the Civil State to take cognizance of any Spiritual cause; and I do positively assert it, to be the proper and alone work of the holy Son and Spirit of God in the hands of his Saints and Prophets, to manage Heavenly and Spiritual causes (and that only with Spiritual Weapons against Spiritual Oppositions.) And therefore that the Higher Powers have been constantly deceived by the Mercenary and Hireling Ministry; who being themselves deceived, deceive; and tack about (as the Wind, and Time, and Advantage blows) from Popery to Protestantism, from Protestantism to Popery, from Popery to Protestantism again! From Prelacy to Presbyterie, from Presbyterie, many to Independency; and will again to Presbyterie and Prelacy, if not to Popery (in some cases) rather then lose (as they say) the Liberty of Preaching. But what that loss is of somewhat else (Gain, Honour, &c.) let themselves, and all men, judge impartially in the fear of God. Persecution?

5. I humbly acknowledge (as to Personal worth) I deal with men, for many excellent gifts, elevated above the common rank of men; yea, and for Personal Holiness (many of them) worthy of all true Christian Love and Honour.

The excellent
Gifts and Spi-
rits of many,
who are yet ca-
pitivated with a
mercenary spi-
rit and princi-
ple.

In which respects when I look down upon my self, I am tri-
ally perswaded to acknowledge my unworthiness to hold a
Candle or a Book unto them. And yet, if I give flattering
Titles unto men, my Maker (said Elihu) would quickly take
me away; and why therefore (since I have not been al-
together a stranger to the Learning of the Egyptians, and
have trod the hopefullest paths to Worldly preferments,
which for Christ's sake I have forsaken) since I know what
it is to Study, to Preach, to be an Elder, to be applauded;
and

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and yet also what it is also to tug at the Oar, to dig with the Spade, and Plow, and to labour and travel day and night amongst English, amongst Barbarians !) why should I not be humbly bold to give my witreſs faithfully, to give my counſel effectually, and to perſwade with ſome truly pious and conſcientious ſpirits, rather to turn to Law, to Phyſick, to Souldiery, to Educating of Children, to Digging (and yet not ceaſe from Prophecyng) rather then to live under the ſlavery, yea and the cenſure (from Chriſt Jeſus and his Saints, and others alſo) of a mercenary and Hirſling Miſtriſtry ?

The Author's humble advice to ſuch excellent and worthy Spirits as are yet captivated in the Trade of Hirſlings.

6. To which end, my humble and hearty cry is to the Father of Lights, to plead with all his Children of Light effectually ; ſo that they may look up, wonder, and ſay, Am I a Child of Light ? Is the Father of Lights my Father, and the Saints my fellow Brethren and Schollars in Chriſt Jeſus, the children of Light alſo ? What make I then in dark places, like thoſe that have been dead of old ? What make I amongst the Graves and Tombs ; the Livings, Benefices, Promotions, Stipends, &c ?

Holy perſons moſt unfit for unholy places :

I have been told a quick paſſage between the truly Noble Earl of Eſſex (in Queen Elizabeth her days) and a truly able and zealous Non-conformiſt : I have ſaid the Earl, been ſtudying a great while theſe two points ; Firſt, the Perſons of the Biſhops ; and I have laboured with the Queen to prefer none but good men to her Biſhopricks.

The next thing is their Places ; which if I find them to be as bad as their Perſons be ; then, then &c. But they ſoon cropt off that Noble head &c.

That ſame bleſſed Spirit breaths (I doubt not) in many heavenly Spirits of our Times in Parliament, in Council, in the Army ; and their holy deſire hath been to prefer the choice and flower of Able and Godly men to Places in City, in Country, in Univerſity. It may yet ſo pleaſe the Father of Spirits, to ſtir up their Noble minds to meditate as well Hirſlings places, as they have too well known their perſons. It may alſo be, that his moſt holy and pure Eye ſees, Children.

the God moſt wiſely diſpoſeth of his work, ſome to the Father, and ſome to the ſees, Children.

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sees, they have been highly honoured, and enough already : More work is left for growing sprigs, for whom some Crownes are kept to which their Fathers heads were not so fitted.

Impartial soul
freedom to all
the people of
the Nation.

7. And yet although I humbly give the Civil state it's Right, to wit, to take down places or persons which themselves or Fathers have erected : yet am I also far from taking off a yoke from one, to clap on the neck of others. Let the Townes, the Parishes, and divisions of people in the three Nations be undisturbed by any civil Sword, from their consciences and worships ; though traditional, though Parochial : and let their maintenance be by Tents and Fifts, or how they freely please.

1. Only let it be their souls choice and no enforcing Sword, but what is spiritual in their spiritual causes,

2. I plead for Impartiality and equal freedom, peace, and safety to other Consciences and Assemblies, unto which the people may as freely goe, and this according to each conscience, what conscience soever this conscience be (not transgressing against Civilities) whether of Jews or Gentile.

Object. But would you have say some, Jews, Turks, and Papists live in Protestant countries ?

I answer, I judge it here only seasonable to say, that I humbly conceive, that this objection, and all that can be said (as to piety or policy) is satisfied in my late unwashing of M. Cotton's washing of the Bloody Tenent : in that late endeavour, I humbly hope, I have made it evident, that no opinion in the world is comparably so bloody, or so blasphemous as that of punishing, and not permitting, in a civil way of Cohabitation, the consciences and worships, both of Jewes and Gentiles.

Where the
guilt of all the
blood spilt in
Ireland lies.

Ireland hath been an Akeldama, a field of blood ; probable it is, that the guilt of all that blood, Protestant and Papist, will fall upon this Bloody Tenent, of which both Papist and Protestant are guilty ; to wit, of not permitting the Hereticks, the Blasphemers, &c. as the Sword falls
either

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either into the hand of a Popish or a Protestant Victor.

What a voice from heaven is there, in the forepast ages of our Fathers, now rotten under us ! From Henry the second his time, when Englands first yoke was clapt on poore Irelands neck, I say from Henry the second his time, unto Henry the eight, while their consciences had freedom under popish Kings of England, how little blood was spilt, English or Irish, compared with the showers and rivers both of one and the other. spilt in the few years of our Protestant Princes, while the consciences of the Catholicks have been restrained by the civil Sword and penalities ?

Eightly, In the discourse it will appear, how greatly some mistake, which say I declame against all Ministries, all Churches, all Ordinances; for I professedly avow and maintain, that since the Apostasie, and the interrupting of the first ministry and order, God hath graciously and immediately stirred up and sent forth the ministrie of his Prophets, who during all the raigne of Antichrist, have prophesied in sackcloth, and the saints and people of God have more or less gathered to and assembled with them: they have praid and fasted together, and exhorted and comforted each other, and so do, notwithstanding that some are not persuaded and satisfied, (as others conceive themselves to be) as touching the doctrines of Baptismes, and laying on of hands.

The ministry of Prophets, and the People of God have assembled with them all the reigne of Antichrist.

Lastly what ever be the Issue of all their publick agitations, my humble and hearty cry to the Father of mercies, is for every soul in the three Nations, that desire to fear him; whether of higher or lower rank, that we may more and more cry and endeavour for assurance of personal reconciliation in the blood of the lambe, more and more for participation of the divine Nature in the purity and holiness of the spirit of God: more and more lament (with Jeremy) the division and desolations of God's people and the holy Ordinances and Worship of God in Christ Jesus; more and more press after love and all possible communion with God's people in the midst of many differences: more and more abound in mercy and compassion to the soules and consciences;

The duty of each particular child of God in the midst of differences and distractions.

The Epistle Dedicatory.

consciencs; and wofull conditions of others, Jews or Gen-
tiles, and more, and more prepared with the golden shoes of
the preparation of the Gospel of peace, ready for all the good
pleasure of God in Christ Jesus; for prosperity, for adversity,
for abundance, for want, for liberty, for imprisonment, for
honour, for dishonour, for life, for death, as knowing that
they that suffer with Jesus, shall not only Reigne with him,
but here also in the midst of outward sorrows, be filled with
Joy unspeakable, and full of Glory.

Being

Being Desired by some Loving
 Friends to cast in my *Mite* as to that Hea-
 venly *Proposition* of Propagating the
Gospell of *Christ Jesus*, I am humbly
 bold to *Propose* these *Conclusions*,
 and their *Consequaries* following.



He two great *Prophets* of *Gods* Re-
 vealed Councell, *Moses* (the Ser-
 vant) and *Christ Jesus* (the Lord)
 as they have both declared unto
 us a *Creation*, a *Creatour*, the *Ship-*
wrack of *Mankind*, the *Restoration*,
 the *Restorer*, so have they both re-
 vealed unto us a *visible Company* of the holy *Worship-*
pers of this one most glorious *Creatour* and *Redeemer*,
 and that as for his owne most glorious praise, so in op-
 position to all *false Gods*, who also are attended with
 their *visible Worship*s and *Worshippers*.

In order to *Gods visible worship* the Lord *Jesus* hath
 broken downe the *Wall* of Division between the *Jewes*
 and the rest of the *Nations* of the World, and sent forth
 his *Ministers* (*Wisedomes Maidens*) unto all *Nations*,
 to bring in (by the *Gospels Invitation*) *Profelites*, *Con-*
verts, *Disciples*, such as should Eternally be saved, to
 begin that heavenly and Eternall *Communion* in Hea-
 ven, here in an holy and *visible Worship* on the Earth.

This going forth of the true *Ministers* of *Christ Je-*
sus is represented under the *Figure* of the *white Troopers*
 in the opening of the first *Seale* where the Lord *Jesus*

B

1. Conclus.

Moses, &c *Christ*
 reveale from
 God a *Visible*
Worship.

2. Conclus.

Prov. 9.

Christs Mes-
sengers sent into
 the Wo:ld.

The white
Troopers.

in

in his first *Messengers* rode forth upon the *White horse*, or *Horses* of the word of truth and meeknesse (*Psalm*. 45.) *Conquering* and to conquer in the *souls* of Men.

3. *Conclus.*

The *White*
Troopers Rout-
ed.

Thirdly, From the 6. of the *Revelations* to the 19. we hear no more of those *white-horsemen*, that is (as I conceive) of the *Apostles* or *Messengers* of *Jesus Christ*, (the whole *streame* of the *Intervening Prophecies*, from the 6. to the 19. insinuating a totall *Routing* of the *Church* and *Ministry* of *Christ Jesus*, put to flight, and retired into the *Wildernesse* of *Desolation*.)

4. *Conclus.*

A state of
Witnesses dur-
ing the *Apo-*
stasie, *Revel.*
1c. & 11.

Fourthly, during the dreadfull *Apostacy* and *Desolation*, the Lord hath not left the *World* without *witnesse*, but hath graciously and wonderfully stirred up his holy *Prophets* and *Witnesses*, such as were before the *Waldenses* more obscure, but more eminently the *Waldenses*, the *Wickliviſts*, the *Hussites*, the *Lutherans*, the *Calvinists* (so called) who have as *Witnesses* prophcyed and mourned in *Sack-cloath* 1260 dayes or years (prophetically) I say mourned for the routing, desolating of the *Christian Church* or *Army*: and panted and laboured after the most glorious *Rally* thereof, and *Restoration*.

This *Testimony* is probably neer finished, and the *Saints* by their late and yet following wars (I say probably) must inrage the *Antichristian world*, so far as to provoke the *Nations*, to their great and generall slaughter, called the slaughter of the *Witnesses*, *Revel.* 11. After which and their shame three years and a halfe, followeth their most glorious and joyfull *Rising*.

5. *Conclus.*

The 144000.
Virgins, the
twelve times
12000. my-
sticall *Israe-*
lites, *Prophets*
and *Witnesses*.

These *Witnesses*, these *Prophets*, are probably those one hundred forty four thousand *Virgins*, mysticall *Israelites*, twelve times twelve, which stand with the *Lamb* on *Mount Zion*, against the *Romish Beast*, and are the same Number sealed twelve times twelve, *Revelations* 7.

But

But there is in the same seventh Chapter, a numberles *Number*, which no man can number, to wit, the *Converts* of the *Nations* of the world, which must yet come flowing unto *Christ Jesus*, after this his famous come *Conquest* over the *Devil*, the *Dragon* in the *Romane Popes*, having before triumphed over him in the *Romane Emperours*.

A two-fold famous number of the followers of *Christ Jesus* in these times.

The *World* divided (say our ablest *Cosmographers*) into thirty parts, as yet but five of thirty have heard of the sweet name of *Jesus a Saviour*: His *Messengers* must yet goe forth into the other twenty five, after the downfall of the *Papacie*, when also at the *Fullnesse* of the *Gentiles*, or *Nations* comming in, shall be the joyfull *Raising us from the Dead* of the (*Accursed*, and yet *Beloved Nation* of the) *Jewes*, *Rom. 11. Revel. 18. & 19.*

The Fullnesse of the *Gentiles*, and *Conversion* of the *Jewes*.

The *Civill State* of the *Nations* being meerly and essentially *civill*, cannot (*Christianly*) be called *Christian States*, after the patterne of that holy and typical *Land of Canaan*, which I have proved at large in the *Bloudy Tenent*, to be a *Non-such* and an *unparallel'd Figure* of the *Spiritual State* of the *Church* of *Christ Jesus*, dispersed, yet gathered to him in all *Nations*.

6. Concluf.

The *Civill State* cannot reſtraine or conſtraine in *Spirituals*.

The *civill Sword* (therefore) cannot (rightfully) act either in *Reſtraining* the *Souls* of the people from *Worſhip*, &c. or in *conſtraining* them to *Worſhip*, conſidering that there is not a *Tide* in the *New Teſtament* of *Chriſt Jesus*, that commits the *Forming* or *Reforming* of his *Spoſe* and *Church* to the *civill* and *worldly Powers*.

Seventhly, no man ever did nor ever ſhall truly go forth to *Convert* the *Nations*, nor to *Prophecy* in the preſent ſtate of *Witneſſes*, againſt *Antichriſt*, but by the gracious *Inſpiration* and *Inſtigat*ion of the holy *Spirit* of *God*, according to *1 Cor. 12.* where the holy *Spirit* diſcourſing of thoſe three [*Gifts, Adminiſtrations, O-*
B 2 *perations*]

perations] tells us that No man can say that *Jesus* is the Lord, but by the *Holy Spirit*: And *Revel. 11*. I will give power to my two Witnesses, &c.

No other present Sender but the holy Spirit of God,

I prejudice not an External Test and Call, which was at first and shall be againe in force at the *Resurrection* of the Churches (as Mr. COTTON himselfe calls it in *Revel. 20*.) But in the present State of things, I cannot but be humbly bold to say, that I know no other True Sender, but the most Holy Spirit. And when he sends, his Messengers will goe, his Prophets will Prophecy, though All the World should forbid them.

Confessarie.

Pretenders to that Grand Commission, Matth. 28. mistaken.

From the former Conclusions we may first see upon what a false Sent or Word our Fathers and our selves have run as to the true Ministry appointed by Christ *Jesus*: How many thousand Pretenders have been and are (Protestants and Papists) to that Grand Commission, Matth. 28. Goe into all Nations, Teach and Baptise, &c?

Not the true Begetting or Feeding Ministry appointed by Christ *Jesus*, yet extant.

In the poor small span of my Life, I desired to have been a diligent and Constant Observer, and have been my selfe many wayes engaged, in City, in Countrey, in Court, in Schools, in Universities, in Churches, in Old and New-England, and yet cannot in the holy presence of God bring in the Result of a satisfying discovery, that either the Begetting Ministry of the Apostles or Messengers to the Nations, or the Feeding and Nourishing Ministry of Pastors and Teachers, according to the first Institution of the Lord *Jesus*, are yet restored and extant.

Quest.

It may then be said, what is that Ministry that hath been extant since Luther and Calvins time (especially what is that Ministry that hath been Instrumentall in the hand of the Lord, to the conversion of thousands?)

I answer, The Ministry of Prophets or Witnesses, standing with Christ *Jesus*, against his great corivall, and

and competiour *Antichrist*, Revel. 10. 11.

The whole Books of *Martyrs* (or *Witnesses*) is nothing else but a large *Commentary* or *History*, of the *Ministry* of *Witnesses*, during all the *Reigne* of the *Beast*, to this day.

The Ministry of Prophets immediately stirred up by God.

Look upon *Berengarius* with the Saints enlightned by him; Look upon *Waldus* with his *Waldenses* in France, *Wickliffe* in England, *John Hus*, and *Jerome* of Prague in Bohemia; *Luther* in Germany, *Calvin* in Geneva; what were they but the holy Prophets of *Christ Jesus*, in those Parts, and other Places, and Countries, now examine their *Witnesses* in two Particulars.

1. Negatively, wherein they *Witnessed* against the False, against the *Usurpations* and *Abominations* of *Antichrist*; and therein they were the *Infallible Witnesses*, and *Prophets* of *Christ Jesus*, *Preaching* and oft times *Suffering* to the *Death* for his *Names* sake. But,

The two Prophets in Sackcloth.

2. View them in their *Positive Practice* and *Worships*, as they have assumed and pretended to such and such *Ministries*, and *Titles*, and *Churches*, and *Ministrations*, and there is not one of them, no not *Calvin* himselfe (the greatest *Pretender* to *Church-Order*) but the Father of *Lights*, in our times of *Light*, hath been graciously pleased to discover their great *mistakes*, and *wandrings* from the first *Patternes* and *Institutions* of *Christ Jesus*.

I know the multitudes of *Interpretations* given upon Revel. 11. as touching the two *Witnesses*, and that many, if not most, incline to beleeve, at least to hope and desire, that their *slaughter* may be past and over: unto which in all humble submission to the holy *councells* of God, for *Zions* sake, I most heartily say as *Jeremy* once said in another, something a like case, *Amen*. But all the *Interpretations* extant, that ever I have yet heard

A glance on Revel. 11.

The Apostacy
the Witnessse
the slaughter,
the after rising
all universall.

heard or read of, they seem to me to lock up the *sun* in a *Chamber*, they are too *narrow* and *particular*, and like some *Almanacks*, calculated for one *Meridian* and *Climate*. For *Antichristianisme* is an *Universall* plague-sore spread over all the *Empire* that was *Romane*: The *Romane* Popes, as *Vicars* of *Christ Jesus*, pretend to a *Romane* *Catholicisme*, or *Universality* also. The *Lord Jesus* his *cause* therefore, and the *cause* of his *Saints*, is of a more generall and *universall* concernment, such hath the *Witnessse* of his *Servants* been in all *Ages* and *Countries* of *Europe*. Now notwithstanding many particular *slaughters* (as the *Book* of *Martyrs* and other *Catalogues* of *Christ's* *Witnessses* testify) yet I see it not possible that that *Scripture* can be satisfied, but that after the *Universall* finishing of the *Witnessse*, there must follow an *universall* persecution and *slaughter* unto which an *universall* provocation, and *Exasperation* by the *Saints* must probably precede and give *Occasion*.

Quest.

Wherein hath the former and latter *Ministry* been defective?

Gifts.

Answer, In all these four, their *Gifts*, their *Calling*, their *Worke*, their *Wages*.

Pretences to
Mat. 28. examined.

First, In their *Gifts*, for notwithstanding they pretend to the *Apostles* *Commission*, and to succeed them, *Mat. 28.* yet they have never pretended to the *Gifts* and *Qualifications* of such a *Ministry*, nor have they ever been able to clear up those two *Foundations* of the *Christian Religion* (*Heb. 6.*) the *Doctrine* of *Baptisme*, and the *laying* on of hands.

Cal ling.

Secondly, Notwithstanding that some plead their *Succession* from the *Apostles* or *Messengers*, yet are they forced to run into the *Tents* of *Antichrist*, and to plead *Succession* from *Rome*, and neither such nor others which plead their *Calling* from the *People*, can prove

to

[7]

to my conscience, from the testimony of Christ Jesus, that either, *Christ's succession* did run in an *Antichristian* line, or that two or three godly persons might first make themselves a church, & then make their *Ministers*, without a preceding *Ministry* from Christ Jesus unto them, to gather, and to guide them in such their *Administrations*.

Thirdly the *worke* of that *Commission* (Mat. 28.) was exercised and administered to the *Nations*, as *Nations*, and the *World*, but all our professed *Ministrations*, former and latter have been carried on (in a grand and common mystery) for the *converting* of a *converted* people, for if we grant all *Protestant Nations* to be *Christians*, and so act with them in prayer as *Christians*, and the *children of God*; how can we pretend to *convert* the *converted*, and to *preach* unto them to convert them? One or other must be denied, to wit, that they are *converted*, or if *unconverted*, that we may offer up *Christian* and *Spiritual* sacrifices with them. No *Herauld*, no *Embassador* sent to a city or army of *Rebels* did ever (constantly least of all) performe such *actions* of state with those *Rebels*, which represents or renders them in a *capacity* of honest and faithfull subjects. Oh the *Patience* and *forbearance* and *Long-suffering* of the most High, whose *Eyes* yet are as a *flame of Fire*.

A stupendious Mystery of Preaching to convert the converted.

Fourthly, In their *Wages*, whether by *Tithes* or otherwise, they have alwayes run in the way of an *Hire*, and rendred such *Workemen* absolute *Hirelings* between whom and the true *sheepheard* (Joh. 10.) the Lord Jesus puts so expresse and sharp a *Difference*: so that in all humble submission, I am bold to maintaine, that it is one of the grand *Designes* of the most High, to breake downe the *Hireling Ministry*, that *Trade*, *Faculty*, *Calling* and *Living*, by *Preaching*, and that if All the *Prin-*

Wages.

ces

ces, States, Parliaments and Armies, in the world should joyn their Heads and Hearts and Armes and Shoulders to support it, yet being a part of Babel and confusson, it shall sinke as a Mil-stone from the Angels hand into the deeps for ever.

Object.

But is not the Labourer worthy of his Reward?

I answer, There is no Reward (by infinite degrees) comparable to an hundred fold (though with persecution) in this Life, and in the world to come eternal life, to all that deny themselves in this Life, and doe, and teach, and suffer for the name of the Son of God.

More strictly and particularly I answer,

Christ Jesus
never made
Bargaine with
his Messen-
gers or Pa-
titors.

First, He that makes a Trade of Preaching, that makes the cure of Souls, and the charge of mens eternall well-fare, a trade, a maintenance, and living, and that explicitly makes a covenant or bargaine (and therefore no longer penny no longer Paternoster, no long pay no longer pray, no longer Preach, no longer fast, &c.) I am humbly confident to maintaine, that the Son of God never sent such a one to be a Labourer in his Vineyard: Such Motions spring not from the living and voluntary Spring of the holy Spirit of God, but from the Artificiall and worldly respects of Money, Maintenance, &c.

Q^d st.

Wherein consists the making of the Hirelings, exp^{licit}, and imp^{licit} Bargaine.

The Lands &
Countries di-
vided for gain
as Daniel
speaks, and
men know in
a way of Hire
what to be-
fure of ex-
presly.

I answer, Tis exp^{licit}e, expresse and plaine, when there is a mutuall declaring and agreeing, for so much or so much, in one kinde or another, as the Levite agreed with Micha in the Judges.

Of this sort of exp^{licit}e and plaine Bargaines by way of Tithes, stipend, &c. How is our owne and other Nations full, and how many thousands are there of the instances of moving and removing from Leaner to fatter

Benefices

Benefices, like the former *Levite*, from the poor *Chaplain-ship* of *Micahs* family, to the more rich and eminent *Devotion* of a *Tribe* of *Dan*, just like *Servants* hired by the yeare (more or lesse) stay not when they hear of proffers of more *Ease* and better *Wages*.

Secondly, an *implicite* or implied *Bargaine* or *Contract* is when there passeth no *expresse Agreement* for so much or so much, but having been brought up (as we say) to that only *Trade*, they must make their living of it, and therefore being something convinced of the *Grosser* way, they are content as *Water-men*, *Porters*, and the like, with some kind of *Intimations* by word of mouth, or in course which shall amount to such a promise as this *expresse*: I know your *Fare*, your *Due*, I will content you, &c. Trust to my *Courtesie*: The triall of this is plaine, for without such an *Implication* or *implicite* promise, the *Hireling* will not, indeed he cannot (having no other way to live on) move his *Lip* or *Tongue*, no more then a *Water-man* or *Porter*, his *Hand* or *Foot*.

An *implicite* *Bargaine* (like an *Onion*) is a *Bargaine* infolded and wrapt up with more subtle feelings, &c.

Secondly, as to the *Labourer* worthy of his *Reward*, I answer, we find no other *patterne* in the *Testament* of *Christ Jesus*, but that both the *Converting* (or *Apostolical Ministry*) and the *Feeding* (or *Pastorall Ministry*) did freely serve or minister, and yet were freely supported by the *Saints* and *Churches*, and that not in stinted *Wages*, *Tithes*, *Stipends*, *Sallaries*, &c. but with larger or lesser *supplies*, as the *Hand* of the *Lord* was more or lesse extended in his *weekly blessings* on them.

The first *patterne* of *Ministers Maintenance*.

Thirdly, when either through *poverty* or *neglect*, *support* and *maintenance* failed, yet still they eyed (as *Sea men* and *Souldiers* say) the *Good* of the *Voyage*, and the *Battel* (the *common Cause* of the *Lord Jesus*) and their owne hands day and night, supplied their owne and

C

others

others *Necessities*. And this was and will be the *only* way of the *Labourers* of the Son of God.

Objection.

The *Priests* and *Levites* under the Law had settled and constant Maintenance.

I answer, Blessed be the *Father* of *Lights* who hath shewne his people of late times, the great difference between the *stated* and settled *Nationall Church*, the *Ministry*, and maintenance thereof, and the (ordinary) afflicted, moving, flying, state of the *Church*, and *Churches* of *Christ Iesus* all the world over.

Objection.

Although it be granted that the *Hireling Ministry*, both *explicite* and *implicite*, is none of *Christs*, yet this is *wonderfull*, what should be the *Reason* why so much good hath been wrought thereby, as the *conversion* of thousands? &c.

Gods infinite
patience in
bearing with
his peoples
Failings.

I answer, All the *wisedome*, *mercy*, *goodnesse*, and *piety* that is in us, is but a drop to the Ocean of that which is in the *Father* of *mercies*, who with infinite *pity* and *patience*, passeth by the *ignorances* and *weaknesses* of his Children. Hence *Luther* and other *Monks*, *Crammer* and other *Bishops*, *Calvin* and other *Presbyterians*, God hath graciously covered their *Failings*, and accepted his owne *Grace* of good *Desires*, good *Affections* and *Endeavours*, though many wayes defiled with sin.

Thus was his infinite *Goodnesse* pleased to overlook the sin of *Poligamie*, or many *Wives*, in which so many of the *Fathers* or *Patriarchs* of *Israel*, were brought forth.

Thus was he pleased to passe by the sins of the *High places*, where *Solomon* himselfe offered Sacrifice. And yet as to this great point of good being done, we may with truth assert two things.

First, where God hath been pleased to bring in one *Soule* to Himselfe by the *Hireling Ministry*, many more have

have been brought home by the *voluntary* and more *single preachings* of some, whether publick or private; by the endeavour of *private christians*, by the *reading* of the holy *Scriptures*, by *godly examples*, by *afflictions*, &c.

The most voluntary preaching ever most fruitfull.

Hence wofull experience hath made it evident, that many excellent men (in their *persons*, and the *graces* of *Gods Spirit*) have laboured a score of yeares and more, in an Hireling way, without the *birth* of one *child to God*: while others singly out of *Love to Christ Iesus*, have despised *Bargaines* and *Hire*, and been more abundantly blest with mercifull *successes* and *fruitfulness*. Hence sure it is that there have been and are many excellent *Prophets* and *VVitnesses* of *Christ Iesus*, who never entred (as they say) into the *Ministry*, towit, *Lawyers*, *Physitians*, *Souldiers*, *Tradefmen*, and others of higher and lower *rank*, who by *Gods holy Spirit* (breathing on their *meditations* of the *holy Scriptures*, and other private helps) have attained and much improved, an excellent *Spirit* of *knowledge*, and *Utterance* in the holy things of *Iesus Christ*, which spirit they ought to cherish, and further to improve, to the praise of *Christ*.

Excellent Prophets of God, who never knew the pretended School of the Prophets.

Amongst so many *Instances* (dead and living) to the everlasting praise of *Christ Iesus*, and of his holy *Spirit*, breathing and blessing where he listeth, I cannot but with honorable *Testimony* remember that Eminent *Christian*, *VVitness*, & *Prophet of Christ*, even that despised and yet beloved *Samuel How*, who being by Calling a *Cobler*, and without humane *Learning* (which yet in its *spheare* and place he honoured) who yet I say, by searching the holy *Scriptures*, grew so excellent a *Textuary* or *Scripture* learned man, that few of those high *Rabbies* that scorned to mend or make a *Shoe*, could aptly and readily from the holy *Scripture*, out-

An honourable remembrance of a despised *Witness* of *Christ Iesus*, *Samuel How*.

go him. And however (through the *Oppressions* upon some mens *Consciences*, even in *Life* and *Death*, and after death in respect of *Burying*, as yet unthought and unremedied) I say, however he was forced to seek a *Grave* or *bed* in the very *Highway*, yet was his *life*, and *death*, and *buriall* (being attended with many hundreds of *Gods* people) *honourable*, and (how much more his *Rising* againe) *glorious*.

No Successe in
Preaching
now compa-
rable to the
first, and wly.

But secondly, *True* and *Right prophecying* and *Preach- ing*, at first was, and shall be (because after *Gods* own way and *Ordinance*) beyond all compare with present *Times*, gloriously and wonderfully *Successfull*. Thus *Acts* 2. & 5. &c. poore *Sinners* came mourning after a *Saviour* by *thousands*.

The *Church* and people of *God* since the *Apostacy*, is an *Army* routed, and can hardly preserve and secure it selfe, much lesse subdue and conquer others, like a *Vessell* becalmed at *Sea*, which though it make some way by *Rowing* and *Towing*, yet not comparable to what it doth when the mighty *gales* of *Gods* holy *Spirit* breath (as most he useth to doe) in the wayes of his owne most holy *Appointments*.

3. *Confessarie*

No remarkable
Conversion of the Na-
tions, as yet
to be expected.

Thirdly, We may see a great mistake as touching that great point of *Conversion*: There is a great breathing in the *souls* of *Gods* people after the *Conversion* of the *English*, *Irish*, *Jewes*, *Indians*, and blessed be *God* for those *Breathings*. Yet doubtlesse the first great worke is the bringing of the *Saints* out of *Babel*, or *confused worshipp*s, and the downefall of the *Papacie*, after the *wit- nesses* slaughtered. Hence it is probably conceived by some upon *Revel. 15.* that untill the *Vyals* be powred forth upon *Antichrist*, the *smoak* so filleth the *Temple*, that no man, that is (few of the *Jewes* or *Gentiles*) shall by *conversion* enter in.

Some

Some will say, haue there not been great and mighty conversions of whole Nations, England, Scotland, French, Dutch, &c. from Popery to be good Protestants, &c.?

Quest.

I answer, If the holy *Scripture*, the first pattern, and dolefull experience may be judge, as an eminent Person lately spake (upon occasion of a Debate touching the Conversion of the Indians) we have Indians at home, Indians in *Cornwall*, Indians in *Wales*, Indians in *Ireland*, yea as to the point of true Conversion, and Regeneration by Gods spirit, who can deny but that the body of this and of all other Protestant Nations (as well as Popish) are unconverted, and (as formerly) ready to be converted and turned forward and backward, as the Weather-cock, according as the powerfull wind of a prevailling sword and Authority, shall blow from the various points and quarters of it.

The bodies of Protestant Nations yet unconverted.

By the mercifull Assistance of the most High, I have desired to labour in *Europe*, in *America*, with *English*, with *Barbarians*, yea, and also I have longed after some trading with the *Jewes* themselves (for whose hard measure I feare the Nations and England, hath yet a score to pay) But yet (as before) I cannot see but that the first and present great Designe of the Lord Jesus is to destroy the *Papacy*, in order to which, two great *WWorks* are first to be effected.

The present Designes and purposes of Christ Iesus.

First, His calling of his people more and more out of the *Babel* of confused *WWorships*, *Ministries*, &c. and the finishing of their Testimony against the *Beast*.

Secondly, the great sufferings and slaughters of the Saints, upon occasion of which Christ Iesus in his holy wrath and jealousy, will burne and teare the bloody whore of *Rome*, in pieces. After which effected, the numberlesse number, *Rev. 7.* the fullnesse of the *Gentiles*

tiles

ties or Nations (Rom. 9.) together with the *Jewes*, shall flow to *Iesus Christ*.

3. *Confellary*. Thirdly, we may hence see our great mistakes, both of our selves & our *Fore-fathers*, as to the pretended *Seed-plots* and *Seminaries* for the *Ministry*, the *Universities* of *Europe*, and the *Universities* of this *Nation*, for although I heartily acknowledge that among all the *outward Gifts* of God, humane learning and the knowledge of *Languages* and good *Arts*, are excellent and excell other outward gifts, as far as light excels darkness, and therefore that *Schools* of humane Learning, ought to be maintained, in a due way and cherished; yet notwithstanding, *In ordine ad ministerium*, as to the ministry of *Christ Iesus* (any one of those *ministeries*, *Ephes.* 4. & 1 *Cor.* 12.) upon a due survey of their *Institutions* and continuall practises compared with the last will and Testament of *Christ Iesus*, they will be found to be none of *Christs*, and that in many respects.

Universities as to the Ministry of *Christ Iesus*, none of his Institutions.

First, as to the name *Schollar*, although as to humane learning, many wayes lawfull, yet as it is appropriated to such as practise the *Ministry*, have been at the *Universities* (as they say) It is a sacrilegious and theevish title, robbing all *believers* and *Saints*, who are frequently in the Testament of *Christ*, stiled *Disciples* or *Schollars* of *Christ Iesus*, and only they as *Beleevers*, and this Title is so much theirs, that both men and women beleeving, were called *Schollars*, *Act.* 9. There was a certaine *Disciple* or *Schollar* called *Dorkas*.

The title Schollar appropriated to the Ministers, a sacrilegious title.

Secondly, As to their *Monkish* and idle course of life, partly so gentle and stately, partly so vain & superstitious, that to wet a finger in any pains or labor, it is a disgraceful and an unworthy *Act*: But the Church is built upon the Foundation of the *Apostles* & *Prophets*, who were *Laborers*, *Pistermen*, *Tent-makers*, *Iesus Christ* (although the

the *Prince of Life* yet) a poor carpenter, the chief corner stone. And I cannot but conceive, that although it should not please the most holy and jealous God to stir up this renowned State, and their renowned *Cromwell* (the 2d) to deal with our refined *Monasteries*, as that blessed *Cromwell* the first did with the more grosse and Palpably superstitious in *Henry* the Eighth his days: Yet in his time the Lord *Jesus* whose is all power in Heaven and Earth will spue out these *Seminaries* of Hirelings, and misticall Merchants out of his mouth, as he hath done their Fathers the superstitious and bloody Bishops before them.

Thirdly, As to their *Popish* and vaunting Titles, so strange from the New Testament and language of *Christ Jesus*, or any word or title that came forth of his blessed mouth, [*Bachelors of Divinity* (or *Godliness*) *Doctor of Divinity*, so clearly and expressly opposite to the command of the Lord *Jesus*: Call no man Father, Doctor, &c. that is, by way of *Eminency* in spirituall and heavenly regards, *Rabbi, Rabbi, Doctor, Doctor, &c.* I omit (because possibly for shame left off in these dayes) their childish ceremonies (used even by the most holy and conscientious) in their superstitious commencings and creations, &c. Their holy Gownes (black and red) holy cassocks, holy caps, holy scarfs, holy Rings, yea, and holy bootes also, &c. All as far from the purity and simplicity of the Son of God, as far as the honest Attire of some sober and chaste Matron, from the wanton and flaunting vanities, of some Painted Harlot.

Fourthly, As to their (pretended) *Spirituall* and holy exercises proper onely to the Churches and Assemblies of the Saints (the onely Schools of the Prophets appointed by *Christ Jesus*;) How have they been by Courts imposed upon every naturall and unspirituall man,

Universities
in order to
Christ Mini-
stery but re-
fined Monaste-
ries.

Pharisaicall
and Popish
Titles,

and
Ceremonies
in their Crea-
tings and
Commenc-
ings.

Spirituall ex-
ercises proper
only to the
Churches and
Assemblies of
Saints, the
true Schools
of the Pro-
phets.

man, who (in Truth) perceives not the *things* that be of God: How have they been prostituted to every prophane and unclean *hyp*; unto whom saith God (*Psa.* 50) What hast thou to doe to preach my word, and to take my name into thy mouth?

Fifthly, As to their being prepared and fitted by these means, as in a way of *Prentiship*, to set up the Trade and way of *Preaching*, the *science* or *faculty* of *Spirituell merchandize* (*Revel.* 18. in a deep *Mystery*) of all sorts of *spices* and *precious things*, the *precious sweet Truths* and *Promises* of *holy Scripture*; yea, (which we may with *holy trembling* add) a trade of selling *God* himselve, *Christ Jesus*, the *Holy Spirit*, *Heaven* and *Hel*, and (too too often) their own *Souls*, and the *Souls* of *thousands*.

Object.

But have there not come *excellent men* from thence, famous for *Learning*, *Holineesse*, *Labours*; *Succeffe* in the *Souls* of *thousands*, &c?

Ans.

Excellent & holy men in the bondage of finfull Institutions, Superstitions.

I say, There have been *excellent men* (some say *Popes* and *Cardinals*, and we are sure) *Lord Bishops* and *Monks* in their personall *Holineesse*, *gifts*, *Learning*, *Labours*, *Succeffe*, and therein famous *Prophets* and *Witnesses* of *Christ Jesus*; yea, they have sealed the *holy Truths* of *God*, which they have learned from the *holy Scriptures*, and which they have declared to others, I say they have sealed them with their heart blood, but that's no *justification* of their evill *standings*, *Institutions*, *Administrations*, &c. which (as by degrees it hath pleased the *Father of Light*; to discover unto them) they have come out of such *Bondage* with *shame* and *sorrow*, and laboured after the *purity* and *simplicity* of the *Son of God*.

Quest.

But extraordinary *gifts* be ceased, how shall now the people of this *Nation* be supplied with *Ministers*,

missers, but from such *Seminaries of Learning*, which fit men both with *Learning to know*, and *Eloquence to utter the heavenly Mysteries*: Or would you have the people be of no *Religion* at all, meer *Atheists*, without *God*, without his *Word*, without a *Ministry*, &c?

I answer, 'Tis true, those glorious *first ministeriall gifts* are ceased, and that's or should be the lamentation of all *Saints*, to wit, the *desolation* and *widow-hood* of *Zion*: yet I humbly conceive that without those *gifts*, it is no ground of *imitation*, and of going forth to *Teach* and *Baptise the Nations*, for, the *Apostles* themselves did not attempt that *mighty enterprise*, but waited at *Jerusalem* untill the *Holy Spirit* descended on them, and inabled them for that *mighty work*: least of all is that a ground of *counterfeiting*, and of suborning a *livelesse picture* of that *first Ministry* (like *Jeroboams Institutions*) when every one that hath *Friends* may be preferred to *Fellowships* in *Colledges*, to the superstitious *Degrees* and *Titles of Divinity* (as they call it) and by these *staires* ascend up the *Gospel preferments* of rich and honourable *Benefices*. Yet

The counterfeit of the Apostolical Ministry.

Secondly, Far be it from me to derogate from that honourable *civility* of training up of *Youth* in *Languages*, and other humane *Learning*, whether in the *City of LONDON*, or other *Townes* and *Cities*, &c. All that I bear witness against, is the *counterfeiting* and *sacrilegious* arrogating of the *titles* and *rights* of *Gods Saints*, and *Churches* (as before) which are the only *Schools* of the *Prophets*: As also against their sacrilegious and superstitious *Degrees* (as they call them) in the profession of *Divinity*, as if they only knew *Divinity*, *Godlineffe*, *Holineffe*, and by such skill in *godlineffe*, and by such *Degrees* might succeed the ancient *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, in the uppermost seats in *Synagogues* and

Institution of Youth in humane learning which shall instructing them with the knowledge & feare of the Lord, most christian and honourable.

Feasts, in Reverend titles and salutations, as the only Masters and Teachers of Religion and godlinesse, and all this in the way of the Hireling, dividing (Dan. 11.) the whole Land for gaine: so that there hath not been roome (without some speciall and extraordinary privilege and license) for the poorest Cottager to live in England, out of the Bishops Diocesse and the Priests Parish, and Payments: therefore,

Thirdly, In all humble reverence and due submission to the *Higher Powers*, I affirme, there was never meerly *Civill State* in the *World*. (for that of the *Jewes* was mixt and *Ceremoniall*) that ever did or ever shall make good work of it, with a *civill sword* in spirituall matters, and therefore have but *builded & pluckt down, planted and pluckt up, Churches, Ministries, Disciplines, &c.* I acknowledge with thankfulness, that many heavenly *Spirits*, in *K. Edwards, & Elizabeths* days, and since that, have been *forming and reforming the states and nations, Religion, Worship, Ministry, &c.* Doubtlesse *Intentions* were holy (as *Davids*) labours great, & *Gods* mercy, and *pity and patience* infinite: yet *experience* long and ever hath told us That there was never a *Nation* yet born in a day to *God*, That the *bodies* of all *Nations* is a part of the world, and although the holy *Spirit of God*, in every *Nation* where the *Word* comes, washeth white some *Blackamores*, and changeth some *Leopards spots*, yet the *bodies* and *bulks* of *Nations*, cannot by all the *Acts* and *Statutes* under heaven, put off the *Blackamores* skin, the *Leopard spots*, &c. O why then should the *wisdom* of so many Ages, still each after other, be preacht (by the prevailing *Hirelings* of each time, againe and again) into the selfe-same *delusion* of washing the *Blackamore*, &c?

There

The Civill State never made good work in spiritualls.

The body of a civill State or Nation, and the elect or chosen of God out of each Nation, must berightly distinguished.

There is not a *Towne*, nor a *Parish*, nor a *person* in *England*, but judge themselves *christian*, and to that end challenge the *right* and *use* of (a *Minister*, in *sacris* some (as in all Religions in the world it is) to serve the Dietie they worship, *ex officio*, as *Sacerdotes*, or holy persons for and with them, in prayers and holy Rites.

This mine eyes have often seen among thousands of the *wild*, yet *wise Americans*, who yet (alas) as all the *Nations* of *Europe*, and the world are utterly incapable of *Formes* and *Ministers* (or *Officers*) of *Christian worship*, while yet in their *naturall* and *worldly* capacities, not borne againe, made *spirituall* and *heavenly*, by the holy *spirit* of *God*. Yet,

Fifthly, I desire uprightly to be far from divers *weights* and *measures* in the *things* of *God* (especially) : and therefore I desire not that *liberty* to my selfe, which I would not freely and impartially weigh out to all the *consciencs* of the *world* beside: And therefore I doe humbly conceive, that it is the *will* of the most *High*, and the expresse and absolute *Duty* of the *civill powers* to proclaim an absolute *freedom* in all the 3 *Nations*, yea in all the world (were their power so large) that each *Towne*, and *Division* of people, yea, and *person*, may freely enjoy what *worship*, what *ministry*, what *maintenance* to afford them, their soul desireth.

To this end I am humbly bold to offer, that it is not the will of the *Father* of *Spirits*, that all the *consciencs* and *spirits* of this *Nation* should violently (*Vi & armis*) be forced into one *way* of *worship*, or that any *Towne* or *Parish* (so called) in *England*, *Scotland*, or *Ireland*, be disturbed in their *worship*, (what *worship* soever it be) by the *civill sword*: If the people freely choose that *way* of *worship*, and *ministry*, and *maintenance* they

Absolute
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the world.

The people
ought not to
be forced to
nor from the
paying of
Tenhs, or
Fifths, according
to their
Conscience.

walk in, yea if they will freely pay them the Tenth
or Fifths, I shall not envy their *Ministers maintenance*,
nor disturb either *minister* or *peoples conscience* by any
other sword, but with that *spirituall sword* of two
edges, the sword of *Gods spirit*, the holy word of God.

Objection.

Grant the *bodies* of the *Nations* to be but *naturall*, but
civill, and therefore cannot without the changings of
Gods spirit, be possibly fit as *spirituall flocks* of *sheep*, for
spirituall Pastors, or *shepheards* to feed and build them
up with the *spirituall Ordinance* of *Christ Jesus*? yet
need they not a converting or begetting *ministry* of
Christ Jesus, to preach *Repentance* to them, to *spiritua-*
lize and change them? And if so, where shall ten
thousand *Ministers* be had to goe to (about) that
number of *Parishes* in *England*, without the constant
supplies of the *seed-plots* and *Seminaries*, the *Universi-*
ties of the *Nation*?

I answer, First, there are great *Disputes* among *Gods*
people whether *Apostles* or *Messengers* sent out to teach
and baptise, that is, to Convert the *Nations*, be yet an
Ordinance of *Christ Jesus* continued, or being extraor-
dinary ceased? There is a great dispute whether the
Ministry of the twelve (*Matth. 10.*) or of the 70 (*Luk.*
10.) be continued since they both had an *immediate*
call from *Christ*.

And *secondly*, Such excellent *gifts*, *abilities*, and *fur-*
niture from *Christ*, which now we find none are furnis-
hed with, as healing the *sick*, raising the *dead*, casting out
Devils, &c. Further, whether all these *gifts* and *admi-*
nistrations, *Ephes. 4.* & *1 Cor. 12.* be to be expected?

For my selfe I am sure of two things.

First, It is but little of the *World* yet that hath heard
of the lost estate of *mankinde*, and of a *Saviour*, *Christ*
Jesus, and as yet the *fullnesse* of the *Gentiles* is not yet
come,

The Aposto-
licall Ministry
to the lost
Nations inter-
rupted.

come, and probably shall not, untill the downefall of the Papacy. Yet

Secondly, The Ministry or Service of Prophets, and Witnesses, mourning and Prophecying in sack-cloath, God hath immediately stirred up and continued all along the reigne of the Beast, and Antichrist of Rome.

Yet of the Prophets and Witnesses mourning in sackcloth continued.

This Witnesse is (probably) neer finished, and the bloody storme of the slaughter of the Witnesses, is yet to be expected and prepared for: But this, and the time, and many passages of Revel. 11. is Controversiall, and something like that of Christs expected personall presence, the state of the New Jerusalem, the new Heavens and Earth, &c.

However this is cleare, that all that are betruſted with spiritnall or temporall Talents, must lay them out for their Lord and Maſter, his Advantage.

That, all (of what rank soever) that have knowledge & utterance of heavenly Mysteries, & therein are the Lords Prophets & Witnesses against Antichrist, must Prophecy against false Christs, false Faith, false Love, false Joy, false Worship, and Ministrations, false Hope, and false Heaven, which poor souls in a golden dream expect & look for.

The Ministry of Prophets more opened.

Gods Prophets of high or low condition, must not keep silence, and hide their Talents, &c.

This Prophecy ought to be (chiefly) exercised among the Saints in the companies, meetings, and assemblies of the fellow-mourners, and witnesses against the falsehoods of Antichrist: If any come in (as in 1 Cor. 14.) yea if they come to catch, God will graciously more or lesse vouchsafe to catch them if he intends to save them.

But for the going out to the Nations, Cities, Townes as to the Nations, Cities, and Townes of the World, unconverted, untill the downefall of the Papacy, Revel. 18. and so the mounting of the Lord Jesus, and his white Troopers againe, Revel. 19. &c. For the going

The Apostolical ministry to the Nations and Peoples.

out

The Apostol-
licall Ministry
to the Nations
and peoples.

out of any to preach upon *hire*, for the going out to convert *sinners*, and yet to hold *communion* with them as *Saints* in prayer : For the going out without such a powerfull *Call* from *Christ*, as the twelve and the seventy had : or without such suitable *gifts* as the first *Ministry* was furnished with, and this especially without a due knowledge of the *Period* of the *Prophecies* to be fulfilled, I have no *Faith* to *act*, nor in the *Actings* and *Ministrings* of others : for

The Lords
worke only
in the Lords
way.

There is but one *God, Lord and Spirit*, from whom those *Gifts, Administrations and Operations* proceed, 1 *Cor. 12.* without whose holy & heavenly concurrence in all those three, both *Gifts and Administrations and operations*, instead of *Glorifying* the name of *Christ*, and saving *Souls*, we may *Blaspheme* his *Name*, and grieve his *spirit*, and hinder and harden poor *souls* against *Repentance*, when by *fellowship* in prayer with them as with *Saints*; we perswade them of their (already) blessed state of *Christianity*, and that they are *New-born, the saints, and sons*, and daughters of the living *God*; therefore.

The grand
oppression of
the whole
Nation is the
Parish infor-
ced constitu-
tion.

Lastly, If it shall please our most Noble *Governours*, to search into the *institution and constitution* (as they have done of the *Diocesan* so also) of the *National and Parish Churches* (concerning which I shal humbly subjoyn some *Queries* in the close of all;)

If they please to take off the *Yokes*, the *Soul Yokes* of binding all persons to such *parochiall or parish formes*, permitting them to injoy their own *belief*, whether within or without such *Parish worships, Parish maintenance, Parish maryings, Parish Buryings*, by which the *souls and consciences* of so many have been inbondaged in *life and death*, and (their *bodies*, in respect of *buryings*) after death.

If

If they shall please so far (if not to countenance yet) to permit impartially All consciences, and especially the consciences, the meetings and assemblings of faithfull and conscionable people, (the *Voluntiers* in preaching *Christ Jesus*): so as that what people and persons please, may peaceably frequent and repaire to such *spirituall meetings* and *assemblies*, as they doe the *Parish Churches*: I am humbly confident, that as to the point of *converting souls to God* (so far as the present state of *Christianity* can be so promoted) the *souls of thousands* will blesse God more, then if *Millions of Hirelings* were sent abroad from all the *Universities*, both of *Popish* and *Protestant Countries*.

Freedom for the people to frequent the word in other Assemblies beside the Parish, a great and hopefull means of blessed and Soull-saving fruit to the Nation.

Fourthly, Upon the grounds first laid, I observe the great and wonderfull *mistake* both our owne and our *Fathers*, as to the *civill powers* of this world, acting in *spirituall matters*. I have read (as blessed *Latimer* once said) the last *Will and Testament* of the Lord *Jesus* over many times, and yet I cannot finde by one tittle of that *Testament*, that if he had been pleased to have accepted of a *temporall Crowne and Government*, that ever he would have put forth the least *finger of temporall civill power*, in the matters of his *spirituall affairs* in *Kingdome*.

4 *Consefary*.
Christ Jesus no Founder of Covill power, in spirituall causes.

Hence must it lamentably be against the Testimon of *Christ Jesus*, for the *Civill state* to impose upon the *Soules of the People*, a *Religion*, a *Worship*, a *Ministry*, *Oaths* (in Religious and Civil affairs), *Tithes*, *Times*, *Days*, *Marryings* and *Buryings* in holy ground, yet in force, as I have (I hope) by the helpe of God, fully debated that great *Question* with Master *Cotton*, and washt off all his late washings of that bloody Tenent of Persecution, &c.

What is then the expresse duty of the *Civill Magistrate*, *Quest.*

strate, as to *Christ Jesus* his *Gospel* and *Kingdome*?

I answer, I know how wofully that Scripture, *Kings shall be thy nursing Fathers, &c.* hath been abused, and elsewhere I have at large discussed that, and other such *Objections*: At present, I humbly conceive, that the great *Duty* of the *Magistrate*, as to *spirituals*, will turne upon these two *Hinges*.

The Civill
Magistrates
duty, as to
spirituals, tur-
ning upon
two hinges.

First, In removing the *Civill Bars*, *Obstructions*, *Hinderances*, in taking of those *Toaks*, that pinch the very *Soules* and *consciencs* of men, such as yet are the *payments* of *Tithes*, and the *Maintenance* of *Ministers*, they have no faith in: Such are the *inforced Oaths*, and some *ceremonies* therein, in all the *Courts* of *Justice*, such are the holy *Marryings*, holy *buryings*, &c.

Secondly, In a free and absolute *permission* of the *consciencs* of all men, in what is meerly *spirituall*, not the very *consciencs* of the *Jews*, nor the *consciencs* of the *Turkes* or *Papists*, or *Pagans* themselves excepted.

Quest.

But how will this *Propagate* the *Gospel* of *Christ Jesus*?

The breath of
Christ Jesus by
which he con-
sumes *Anti-
christ*, stop
by the *Nati-
ons*.

I answer thus, The first grand *Design* of *Christ Jesus* is, to destroy and consume his *Mortal enemy Antichrist*. This must be done by the *breath* of his *Mouth* in his *Prophets* and *Witnesses*: Now the *Nations* of the *World*, have *impiously stoppt* this heavenly *breath*, and *stified* the *Lord Jesus* in his *Servants*: Now if it shall please the *civill State* to remove the *state bars*, set up to resist the holy *Spirit* of *God* in his *servants* (whom yet finally to resist, is not in all the powers of the world) I humbly conceive that the *civill state* hath made a fair *progresse* in promoting the *Gospel* of *Jesus Christ*.

Quest.

This *Mercy* and *freedom* is due to the (meerly) religious *consciencs* of all men in the world. Is there no more due from the *Magistrate* to *Christ Jesus* his *saints* and *Kingdome*?

I answer,

I answer, While I pleade the *Conscience* of All men to beat *Liberty*, doubtlesse I must plead the *Liberty* of the *Magistrates conscience* also, and therefore were his *bounties* and *donations* to his *Bishops* and *Ministers*, as large as those of *Constantine*; who, but the holy *Spirit* of *God* in the mouths of his *Prophets* can restrain him? Onely let not *Cæsar*, (as *Constantine* in his settled *prosperity* did) rob the *God* of Heaven of his *Rights*, the *consciences* of his *subjects* their heavenly *Rights* and *Liberties*.

The Magistrates and all men ought to excell in fruits of *Piety* and *Mercy*, according to conscience.

But under the pretence of propagating the Gospel of *Christ Jesus* (it may be said) what horrible *opinions* and *Spirits* will be vented, as woefull experience hath manifested:

I answer, *Opinions* offensive are of two sorts: some favouring of *Impiety*, and some of *Incivility*.

Against the first, *Christ Jesus* never cald for the Sword of *Steel* to helpe the Sword of the *Spirit* that two-edged *Sword* that comes out of the mouth of the *Lord Jesus*: And therefore if a world of *Arrians* deny the *Deity* of *Christ Jesus*: If a *Maniche* his *humane nature*: If the *Jews* deny both, and blasphemously call our *Christ* a *Deceiver*: Nay, if the *Mahumetans* the *Turkes* (the greater number by far of one *Religion* in the *World*) if they I say, prefer their cheating *Mahomet* before him, What now? must we raile, revile, &c. and cry ou *Blasphemers*, *Hereticks*? Must we run to the *Cutlers shop*, the *Armories* and *Magazines* of the *Cities* and *Nations*? Must we run to the *Cities* or *Nations*, and *Senates*, and cry, Helpe you men of *Ephesus*, helpe O *Inhabitants* of *Jerusalem*, &c. Or must we fly up to Heaven by *Prayers* and *Curses*, to fetch downe *Fire* upon the persecuting *Captains* and their *fisties*? This

No sword to be used against the most horrid *Blasphemies* & *Hereses*, but the two edged sword of the Word, the sword of the Spirit of God.

doe the Nations, this doe false *Christs* and *Christians*, but this did not, this will not doe the *Lambe of God*, the *Lyon of Judah's Tribe*, who with his *Word* and *Spirit* alone (which the Father hath promised to put into his *Mouth*, and the *Mouth* of his *Seed*, and the *Mouth* of his *Seeds Seed* (*Iſa.* 59.) will either kill or save the gain-saying Opposite.

The Second sort, to wit *opinions* of *Incivility*, doubtlesse the *Opinions* as well as *practises*, are the proper Object of the *Civill Sword*: according to that *Magna Charta* for the *civill Magistrate*, *Rom.* 13. and that true *Apothegme* or saying, *Ex malis moribus bone leges*: Good Laws occasioned by *Evill manners*.

Quest.
Tithes ought
 not to be in-
 joyed, or for-
 bidden.

But ought not the *civill Magistrate* to repeal their *Ordinance* for *Tithes*, and also to appoint some course for the *maintenance* of the *Ministry*?

I answer, Upon that Ground of *Removing Soule Toaks*, and not *Restraining*, nor *constraining conscience*, I humbly conceive, that the *civil State* cannot by any *Rule* from *Christ Jesus*, either forbid the payment of *Tithes* to such whose *conscience* is to pay them, or en-joyne them where the *conscience* is not so perswaded: For the further clearing of which *assertion*, I distinguish of the *People* of this *Nation* into two sorts.

First, Such as have a *Freedome* in their minde to frequent the *Publick Parish Assemblies* of the *Nation*, and they are also of two sorts.

The people of
 this Nation ac-
 cording to
 their severall
Consciences di-
 stinguished.

First, Such as *conscienciously* frequent such places, either out of a *consciencious zeale* of worshipping of *God*, or out of a *superstitious* and *traditionall awe*.

Secondly such as can goe or not goe, and care not what *Religion* themselves and the *State* be of.

There is a second sort of *people* in this *Nation*, which
 out

out of *conscience* dare not frequent such *Places*, and they are such ;

First, Such as indeed feare *God*, and are in their *consciences* perswaded of an indelible *Character* of *Holinesse* upon such *Temples*, as *Temples* dedicated to a *Parish* worship.

Secondly, Such as out of an utter dislike of all *Protestant Worship*, and an high esteem of their owne *Catholick Faith*, are as far from love to such places as the former sort.

Now all these *Consciences* (yea the very *conscience* of the *Papists*, *Jewes*, &c. (as I have proved at large in my Answer to Master *Cottons* washings) ought freely and impartially to be permitted their severall respective *Worships*, their *Ministers* of *Worships*, and what way of *maintaining* them they freely choose.

But if the *civill state* injoyne not the *maintenance* of the *Ministry* : If they quite let loose the *Golden Raines* of *Discipline* (as the *Parliament* exprest, and the *Scots* objected) What will become of the *Ministry* of the *Gospel*, and the *Soules* of *men* ? For if each mans *conscience* be at *Liberty* to come to *Church* or not, to *Pay* to the *Minister* or not, the *prophane* and loose will neither *pay* nor *pray*, but turne *Atheisticall* and *irreligious* : The *Ministers* of *Worship* will be discouraged and destitute, and *Parents* will have little mind to expend their *Movies* to make their children *Scholars*, when the *Hope* of their *preferment* is cut off. Objection.

I answer, First that *Supream Court* in their *Declaration* never Declared to barre up all the *Doors* and *Windows* of that *Honorable House*, so that no further *Light* from *Heaven* should breake into their *Souls* and *councils* from the most glorious *Sun* of all *Righteousnes* the *Lord Jesus*,

The Sun of *Righteousnesse* is able to shine more light upon the wisest and the highest.

Some prophane
nesse better
then enforced
Hypocrisie.

Although the *Loose* will be more *loose* (yet) possibly being at more *Liberty* they may be put upon *consideration* and *choice* of wayes of *life* and *peace* yet however it is infinitely better, that the *Prophane* and *loose* be unmasked, then to be *muffled* up under the *veile* and *hood* of Traditionall *Hypocrisie*, which turnes and duls the very edge of all *conscience* either toward *God* or *Man*.

Severall consci-
ences some-
times emulate
each other.

Thirdly, It is not to be doubted, but that each *conscience*, the *Papists* and the *Protestants*, both *Presbyterians* and *Independents* will æmulously strive for (their not onely *conscience* but) *credit* sake, to excell and win the *Garland* in the fruits of *bounty*, &c. Thus a *Jesuite* once in *New-gate* boasted of the *Papists* *charity* to a *Protestant* (put in also for his *conscience* by the *Bishops*) for, pulling out his hand full of *Gold*, look here (said he) are the *fruits* of our *Religion*.

Gain Godlinesse
and
God belly

Fourthly, Such *Parents* or *children* as aime at the *gaine*, and *preferment* of *Religion*, doe often mistake *Gain* and *Gold* for *Godlinesse*, *God-belly* for the true *God*, and some *false* for the true *Lord Jesus*: I adde, such *Priests* or *Ministers* as can force a *maintenance* of *Tithes* or otherwise, by the *Sword*, or else cease *preaching* for want of such or such a *maintenance*, or can remove from *Bishopricks* or *Benefices* (as *Calves* and *Bulls* of *Bashan*) for fatter and rancker *Pastures*: or wanting *spirituall worke* and *maintenance*, are too fine to worke with their hands, as the first *Patternes*, *Christ* first *Ministers* did, how can they say as *Peter* to *Christ Jesus*, Lord thou knowest all things, Thou knowest I love thee? &c. therefore

Lastly, The Father of *Spirits* graciously be pleased to preserve the *Spirits* of our *higher powers* from laying

ing on of *Hay and Stubble*, though upon the *Golden foundation Christ Jesus*, for all such worke in *matters* The wonder-
full burning
of Hay and
Stubble in this
Nation. *spirituall*, which our *Forefathers* either *Popish* or *Protestant* in their severall *changes* in this *Nation* have made, they have been *consum'd* and *burnt* (like *Hay and stubble*) and come to nothing.

The *Summa tatalis* of all the former particulars is this, First, since the people of this *Nation* have been forc't into a *Nationall way* of *Worship*, both *Popish* and *Protestant* (as the *Wheels* of *times* revolutions, by *Gods* mighty *providence* and *permission* have turned about) The *civill state* is bound before *God* to take of that *bond* and *yoak* of *Soul-oppression*, and to proclaime free and impartiall *Liberty* to all the *people* of the three *Nations*, to choose and maintaine what *Worship* and *Ministry* their *Soules* and *Consciences* are perswaded of: which *Act*, as it will prove an *Act* of *mercy* and *righteousnesse* to the *enslaved Nations*, so is it of a binding force to engage the whole and every *Interest* and *Conscience*, to preservethe *Common-freedom* and *peace*. However, an *Act* most suiting with the *piety* and *Christianity* of the holy *Testament* of *Christ Jesus*. Soul Liberty,
ought to be
impartially re-
stored to the
three Nations.

Secondly, The *civill state* is humbly to be implored, to provide in their high *Wisdom* for the *security* of all the respective *consciences*, in their respective *meetings*, *assemblings*, *worshippings*, *preachings*, *Disputings*, &c. and that *civil peace*, and the *beauty* of *civility* and *humanity* be maintained among the chiefe *opposers* and *dissenters*.

Thirdly, It is the *duty* of all that are in *Authority*, and of all that are able, to *countenance*, *incourage*, and supply such true *Voluntiers* as give and devote themselves to the *service* and *Ministry* of *Christ Jesus* in any kind:

All *Christ's*
true *Followers*,
and especially
the *Leaders* a-
mong them,
are a willing
people and
Voluntiers.

kind: although it be also the *duty*, and will be the pra-
ctise of all such whom the *Spirit of God* sends upon any
work of Christ's, rather to work as *Paul* did, among the
Corinthians and *Thesalonians*, then the work and ser-
vice of their *Lord and Master*, should be neglected.

Such true *Christian* worthies (whether endowed
with *humane Learning*, or without it) will alone be
found that despised *modell* which the *God of Heaven*
will onely blesse; that poor *handfull* and three hun-
dred out of *Israels* thirty two thousand by whom the
work of the God of Israel must be effected. And if this
course be effected in the three *Nations*, the *bodies*
and *soules* of the three *Nations* will be more and more
at peace, and in a fairer way then ever, to that peace
which is *Eternall* when this *World* is gone.

*A few Queries subjoynd as to the former
high Question, of propagating the Gospel
or glad Newes of a Saviour.*

I. **F**irst, whether the yet remaining *Division* of the
whole *Land*, into *Nationall* and *Parish Churches*,
and the *centuring* and *assembling* of *People* into a *Parish*
Church, be suitable to the true *Religion* and *Testament*
of *Christ Jesus*: Or rather an *invention* of *Satan* and *Antichrist*,
to divide the *Land* for *gaine*, into *Nationall*,
Provinciall, *Diocesan*, *Parochiall*, so that there is not a
foot of land left in the whole *Nation*, for the holiest or
the highest (without some extraordinary priviledge)
where to finde a resting place out of such a *Church*
compasse. And whether is not such a *Profession* of
Christ Jesus, a *denyall* of *Christ Jesus*, whether is it
not

Dan. II.

Queries as
touching the
Parochiall Di-
vision of the
whole land.

not to make a *State-Religion* and the *ministry* thereof (like the *Dutch*) *State Ministers*, as it was truly said of late, that the *Bishops* were the *Kings Bishops*: And if so, since the *Head of the Nationall Church*, or *Parishes* is *civill*, the *body* be not so likewise, and consequently the whole frame of *Worship*, but *civill* and *Politicall*, and consequently the *Grand Idoll* of *Jealousie*, before the flaming eyes of the *Son of God*.

2. Whether this *Nationall* and *Parishionall* *Forme* of *Worship* be a *State-Act*, and so removeable at their pleasure. Or is it the *Peoples Act* and choise, and not removeable without the peoples free consent: To which end, can the *Nation* give, or the *Parliament* take a power of *framing* and *imposing* a *Religion* upon the people, any more (if not comparably so much) then of *choosing* and *imposing* *Husbands* and *Wives* (in way of *Marriage*) to all the people of this *Nation*: And whether therefore to inforce an *Uniformity* of a *Nation* to one *Religion* or *Worship* (after the *Jewish* patternne) be not a *soul oppression* and *usurpation*, not after *Moses*, much lesse after *Christ Jesus* the *Son of God*.

The Inforcing
of a nationall
way, a nation-
all oppression.

3. If such an holy *Division* of the *Land* be a *State-Act*, and removeable at pleasure, whether the not removing of such a *Forme* will not be set upon the *Parliaments* score, and be a *Controversie* from the *God of Heaven* against them; For sure it is, being a *plant* which neither *God* nor the *Son of God* ever planted, it must irresistibly be plucked up and cast into the *Fire*.

4. If the *State* be found the *Founders* and *Owners* of the *Parish Churches* (the meeting places) whether ought they not to demolish them as *Jehu* did, or at least slight the *Holiness* and *Forme* of them by reducing them to a *civill forme* and use, as the *Army* of late

The Parish
Churches, I-
dol Temples.

dealt

There is a
strange Pro-
phesy extant,
Henry the 8th
Abbeys and
Cels, *Henry*
the Ninth
Churches and
Bellis.

Traditionall
Religion the
Nurse of Hy-
pocritisme and
Destruction.

Dangerous
State-policy.

dealt with some such *Holy places*. And whether is it possible for all the men in the *World*, or *Angels* in *Heaven*, to wash off that *Popish Character* of *Holinesse* while still onely reserved for holy use, which both *Papists* and *Protestants* (succesively and interchangeably) have made of them, as the *Temple* for the *Parish worship*, and so consequently the *High places*, and *Idol Temples*.

5. Is it not more conducible a thousand fold to the peoples eternall welfare, that each *Towne* and *Division* of people in the *Land*, be impartially permitted to make a *stand*, to examine and choose their way of worship *Ministry*, and *Maintenance*: yet whether or no is it not absolutely better that they did freely choose rather a *False Religion* (*Jewish, Popish, Turkish, &c.*) then without their owne free choise, to be nussed up in a way of *Traditionall* and *Customary Religion*, or else in an enforced *Hypocritisme* against *perswasion* and *Conscience*?

6. Whether that *policie* that refuseth to search into these things, pretending danger of *discomposing* the present *Government* and peace of the *Nation*, the *dis-mounting* of the present *Governers*, the *misse* of *State-Ministers* in every *Towne*, to keep the people in *Obedience*, by publishing their *Acts* unto them; I say, is not such *Policie*, *ungodly*, *irreligious*, *unchristian*, and the next way to provoke the *jealousie* of the most *High*, against both *State* and *Statesmen*, and to cause from *Heaven*, some other turne upon this *Power* and *Common-wealth*.

7. Whatever the *duty* of the *civill State* be found to be, as touching the *Parish Formes* and *Churches*, yet is not the unquestionable *duty* of the *State* to take off the *soul yokes* from the *Necks* of all that doe or may inhabit this *Nation*, *Jewes* or *Gentiles*: and as to *Civill things*

things (the proper object of the *civill state*) to cast the Nation into a *civill forme*, and to appoint *civill Officers* thorow-out the Nation; To Record the Birth of children: to take order as to marriages and buryings of all people impartially in a *civill way*: The want of which *civill Ordinance*, as to the latter, hath been a second death in this Nation to multitudes of *Toak-fellows*, *Parents*, &c. who being not able to walk in the Parish wayes of burying in *holy ground*, and by the *Parish Officers*, they have been forced (not without danger also) to the *High-wayes* for succour to their own consciences, and to their *Dead-beloveds*.

The want of *Civill Officers* in this Nation as to birth of children, Marriages and Burials being all but naturall & *Civill things*.

8 Whether since the most *high* hath made bare and naked his holy arme from heaven for this Nation, this Parliament, this Army, in most wondrefull and singular deliverances, preservacions, victories. And since this Nation is set in the midst of the Nations of the world, wearing a Crowne of advantage to be exemplary and presidential to the whole world about us: Whether hath not the most High reserved some wonderfull and singular Acts for the trial of their singular love and gratitude: And since he rewarded *Jehu* with temporall honour to many generations, and will not forget to pay richly for a cup of cold water, &c. since he hath promised an hundred fold in this life, to such as loose for his sake, and in the world to come life everlasting: Is it not the best Policy, wisdom and reason under Heaven to search out only what is his only and acceptable pleasure in *Christ Jesus*, and to trust his infinite power, wisdom and goodnesse, what ever be the present successse or consequents.

Singular mercies call for singular Acts of Exemplary and singular Gratitude.

An Appendix as touching Oathes, A. Querie,

The Holy
name of G d
highly disho-
noured by the
Legall Oaths
of this Nation.

Although it be lawfull (in case) for *Christians* to invoke the Name of the most High in *Swearing*: Yet since it is a part of his holy *worship*, and sometimes put for his whole *worship*, and therefore proper unto such as are his true *Worshippers* in *Spirit* and *Truth*: and persons may as well be forced unto any part of the *worship* of *God* as unto this, since it ought not to be used, but most *solemnly*, and in most *solemne* and *weighty* cases, and (ordinarily) in such as are not otherwise determinable; since it is the voice of the two great *Law-givers*, from *God*, *Moses* and *Christ Jesus*, that in the mouth of two or three *Witnesses* (not *Swearing*) every *Word* shall stand: Whether the inforcing of *Oaths* and *spirituall Covenants* upon a *Nation* promiscuously, and the constant inforcing of all *persons* to practise this *Worship* in the most *triviall* and *common* cases in all *Courts* (together with the *Ceremonies* of *Booke*, and holding up the hand &c.) be not a prostituting of the *Holy Name* of the most High to every *unclean Lip*, and that on slight occasions, and a taking of it by *Millions*, and so many *millions* of times in *vaine*, and whether it be not a provoking of the eyes of his *jealousie* who hath said it, That he will not hold him (what him or them soe ver) guiltlesse that taketh his name in *vaine*.

An

An Humble and Christian proffer of Disputation.

WHereas in the Epistle I intimated my readines to debate the Particulars of this Discourse, &c. I am here humbly bold to Professe, as in the holy presence of the most High, that I am not Conscious to the least Designe or Aime, but that of a Conscionable and Peaceable presenting Verbum opportunum (an Apple of Gold in a Picture of Silver) into those Honorable hands whom it so highly concerns. 'Tis true, my long Exile into and in America, have rendred me now a Stranger, and (after the Dispatch of some Civill Affaires) I should unspeakably rejoyce to be gone to morrow; But while the Most High is pleased to force my stay: He hath also (as I beleeve) inforced my Spirit, againe to proffer, in all Christian meeknes and humility to agitate with whom or before whomsoever, these following Proposals.

First, Since the remoulding of this Nation into the Modell of Protestantisme: the Clergy or Ministry (so call'd) of this Nation, both Prelaticall, Presbyterian and Independent, (however in their persons many of them precious and excellent, yet) as to their Functions and Offices, as to procuring the Magistrates actings in spiritual cases, as to the Worships and Consciences of this Nation, they have been bewildred, if not wholly blinded: For as the Hireling way of Ministry is none of Christs: So for this Hire, have not only the Popish, but the Protestant Clergy, tost up and downe (even like Tennis-balls) the Magistrates and Laws, the Consciences and Worships, the Peace and War, the Weale and Woe of this Nation.

Secondly, In all ages since Constantine, the Hireling Ministry have must wofully mislead the Consciences of the Civill State by Preaching them out of their Civill Spheare and Line, sometimes into an Headship, sometimes into a Footship, (now over and above, and againe as the Revolutions have been) inferiour to, and under the Church: Out of this Civill line or Sphear as this present Age is forced to confesse, that the Civill Magistrates our Fathers before us never made true Christian Worke of it, so I am humbly bold to maintaine they never shall: and therefore

Thirdly, As the Civill permission of all the Conscience

sciences and Worships of all men in Things meerly spirituall is no wayes inconsistent with true Christianity and true Civility: So is it the Duty of the Civill Magistrate to suppress all violence to the Bodies and Goods of men for their Soules beliefe, and to provide, that not one person in the Land be Restrained from, or Contained to any Worship, Ministry or Maintenance, but peaceably maintained in his Soul, as well as Corporall Freedom, To which end I add, that the violent putting in, and putting out of the severall sorts of the Ministers of Worship in this Nation (if against the Peoples Free choice and desire) hath ever and will be yet, while so practised, a Grand oppression, and a Powerfull occasion, both of Civill Insurrections, and Soul mischiefs.

Fourthly, The Lord Jesus Christ, hath not forgotten to be infinitely Faithfull, and infinitely Wise and Tender to the Soules of his Chosen, but hath in all Ages, and in all Conditions and Changes of his Spoule, stirred up by his holy Spirit, and sent such Voluntary Labourers into his Vine-yard, and so will, as have been, and shall be abundantly sufficient for this Nation and all Nations, as may best suit the Holy ends and Periods of his Time and Kingdome.

Fifthly, As he never appointed, so he never needed the casting of whole Nations into Occumenicall, Nationall, Provinciaall, Parochiall or Parish forms and Classes: To feed which Churches and the Ministries thereof, he never appointed nor needed, the Divinity (or Godlinesse) degrees of Universities and Colledges, Nor the enforcing of all the People of a Nation to come to Church (as they call it) nor the Distinction between enforcing to some Ordinances, but not to others, as to the Word and Prayer, and Singing and Paying, but not to the Lords Supper. All which are Plants which God his Father never planted, and therefore (as all such like, though worse Plants and Inventions) must all in his holy Season be plucked up, and cast into the Fire.

F I N I S.

